

# Utilities Coordinating Working Group Construction Phase Utility Coordination Subcommittee Meeting

(Senate Concurrent Resolution 48)

Tuesday, October 1, 2109

DelDOT Administration Building, 800 Bay Road, Dover, DE  
Delaware Conference Room

## MEETING MINUTES

Approved 10/15/19

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bryon Short	Chair, DCA	present
George Zang	Verizon	present
Caroline Trueman	FHWA	present
Eric Cimo	Dept of Transportation Utilities Engineer	present
William Whitaker	Delmarva Power Corporation	present
Alan Marteney	Century Engineering/ACEC-DE	present
Wayne Tyler, Jr.	Artesian Water Company	present
Laszlo Keszler	Delmarva Power Corporation	present
Rick Kerfoot	Comcast	present
Richard Welsh	Chesapeake Utilities	present

OTHERS PRESENT: Meaghan Barna (DelDOT), Brad Saborio (DelDOT), Aimee String (DelDOT)

- I. Welcome and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 11:15 AM by Bryon Short. The committee members introduced themselves.
- II. Review and Approval of Minutes: The committee reviewed the September 17, 2019 meeting minutes. Mr. Marteney made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cimo, to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. Continue Discussion on Obstacles/Challenges: Mr. Short led the discussion on the impacts of contractor changes. Mr. Cimo noted that there is not a standard process for communication changes and recognized this is a broken process. Mr. Saborio noted when he has seen changes made it is because something is not working per the plans, but in an effort to not stall the project the team will move on. If a change is proposed by a highway contractor whether it be to schedule, phasing or means and methods, there has to be a commitment to meet with utility companies to get their insight and buy in. If this does not occur and we do not receive approval from utility companies, then the contractor should not be allowed to proceed with requested changes. It was suggested

that incorporating the utility relocation timeframes (whether advanced work or concurrent work) into the overall highway project CPM schedule is already being done, but could be better communicated. The committee discussed another issue encountered is determining who is responsible for disposing of old, abandoned pipelines when new lines are being installed. It was suggested that further, in depth discussions between DeIDOT and utility companies during design related to phasing and utility relocation may help to resolve some of this.

Mr. Cimo explained there may need to be better communication on what the contractor is doing at various phases of a project. If there is a change, DeIDOT can organize a meeting to discuss the changes. The committee acknowledged there are inconsistencies in communicating construction sequences and inquired if there were best practices for this. It was suggested that constructability issues are discussed throughout the phases so the utility companies are aware. The committee noted that it would be helpful to include the utilities in the scheduling of the project so there is agreement and ownership in the process.

It was suggested that there need to be constructability discussions for highway projects and required utility relocation work. It was suggested that this could be handled through field meetings between DeIDOT and utility companies. Utility companies need to ensure field or construction personnel attend the meeting to provide insight into the relocation designs. If there is potential of utility work occurring in advance of awarding the highway contract, then the constructability review will need to occur early in the design process to verify utility relocation can be performed in advance. It was noted that some states will not advertise highway projects until all utility relocation work is complete.

It was noted that while the utility companies and contractors are held accountable, DeIDOT also needs to be held accountable. Committee members shared they feel they get pushback from DeIDOT, and as a result do not feel there is collaboration. Mr. Cimo stated there are ways to approach so there is not pushback. Mr. Cimo inquired if there are efficiencies DeIDOT could establish, but noted we cannot override traffic safety. Every suggestion/change needs to be re-reviewed by traffic. They are involved throughout.

At the next meeting, the committee will discuss accountability measures. While utilities should be accountable to meet deadlines, it is important to keep in the mind that one utility falling behind schedule can affect the other utilities' ability to complete their work. It is important to recognize that we do not operate in a void. Mr. Cimo will send out information prior to the next meeting with information regarding methods used by the Georgia Department of Transportation. Mr. Saborio explained at the NASTO conference, the use of contractors to do utility relocation work was discussed. Mr.

Keszler explained under federal regulations, an individual must be qualified to relocate gas lines. The committee discussed the possibility of using an approved list of contractors/inspectors to complete this work. Cost was noted as a possible barrier in doing this, and the possibility of drafting legislation for reimbursement was suggested.

IV. Action Items/Future Meetings: The subcommittee will meet every two weeks. The next meeting will be held October 15, 2019.

V. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

VI. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.